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Volume 18, Issue 19

THE UNDERGROUND

www.scar.utoronto.ca/homes/underground/

Tuesday, February 9, 1999

"And in this corner..." - The Cola War hits home; but will U of T ring the bell? *Lina Güiter/UG*

Campus braces for 'Cola Wars'

Iffat Azeem
Contributor

This summer, University of Toronto will encounter a change. The University and Scarborough Campus intend to participate in a cold beverage exclusivity deal, following in the footsteps of other Canadian universities. The contract outlines that one specific cola , Pepsi or Coca-Cola, will become the sole beverage sold on campus, completely eliminating the availability of its competitor. Both soft drink makers are offering exclusive beverage rights.

In turn, the University receives a large sum of money for student groups and facilities. This guarantees the company exposure and a monopoly on marketing rights over all campuses for the duration of the contract. Exclusivity deals like this can last as long as a decade.

Still in its early stages, little has been established. The choice of which cola will dominate remains undecided, but sources say the University is currently leaning towards Coca-Cola. According to Michael Finlayson, Vice-President of Finance, the monetary benefits of taking this step are substantial.

"If the deal goes through, it means more money for student activities," asserts Finlayson.

Financial data has not been comprehensively compiled, and other aspects require additional research before conclusions are reached. Finlayson, along with Bruce Kidd, the Dean of Physical Education, are pushing for the exclusivity deal.

Kidd was not eager to elaborate on specifics but called previous reports "speculation." He further explained: "This whole thing is in its preliminary stages, nothing has been established or decided."

The benefits of the deal for the Physical Education department are more concrete. The department's exclusive contract with Coca-Cola products ensures that they automatically gain a corporate sponsor. Backboards and uniforms displaying Coke logos and slogans give Varsity teams crucial athletic funding.

Many student groups raise concerns over the corporate agreement, and question whether it is indeed necessary. Major companies already make regular contributions that benefit U of T without commercializing the University. The main reason for the deal seems to be the revenue it will generate: a potential one million dollars, say agreement proponents.

The largest worry for the Scarborough Campus remains the allocation of revenue.

"There must be equity in distribution of funds to suburban campuses, and also defining what the money is being used for," said Vinitha Gengatharan, President of SCSC.

For Chris Ramsaroop, president of SAC, the matter is more than monetary allotment. The intrusion of the corporate world in academia and infringement of educational freedom are far more important to the student leader. Ramsaroop asserts that the 'rules of Coca-Cola remain rigid. "It terrifies me that somebody can get sued for selling a competitor's product," said Ramsaroop. He adds that a possible impact of the deal includes the potential of money being

See **COLA**, *page 7*

Liberals unveil student debt platform

Charles Mitchell
News Editor

SAC conducted a forum at Hart House last Thursday on the issue of student debt and unemployment. The lecture was a part of the Student Administrative Council's *Perspective Series*, which invites provincial and federal politicians to discuss matters surrounding post-secondary education.

Caplan would like to see tuition fee's frozen

The Liberal government has been campaigning around the province meeting with student groups in order to ascertain what issues are most important in education and what measures students and administrators would like to see implemented to combat debt and to increase employment prospects.

Youth critic David Caplan was the speaker at this last event. Faced with the upcoming provincial election, the MPP of Oriole apprised the intimate crowd of about a dozen of the provincial Liberal Party's platform towards university students.

Caplan denounced the current Progressive Conservative government for the elimination of programs geared to endow young people with job experience. Current initiatives that serve to help youth attain skills obligate applicants to be free of any type of federal or provincial assistance for at least six weeks prior to enrollment. These measures cripple aid to those that are not educated, creating a social net that employed graduates have to support.

See **LIBERAL**, *page 7*

what's inside?

MIND
PAGE 2
"LAUNCHING CAREERS AT SCARBOROUGH"

BODY
PAGE 9
"THE TRUTH ABOUT MARIJUANA"

SOUL
PAGE 10
EMM GRYNER

Launching careers at Scarborough

Lisa Gardner
Asst. News Editor

Students and recent graduates participated in some "career cruising" at the Career Centre's Career Launch, last Thursday afternoon in the Meeting Place. The three-hour event was aimed at providing students with summer job listings, access to recruiting volunteer organizations, and an opportunity to converse with Career Counselors.

"We had a lot of students keeping us really busy here," said Felicity Morgan, Career Counselor, who along with Liz Annis had organized the function. Morgan asserted additionally that students began perusing the summer job boards slightly before 9am, two hours before the event officially began.

"I really found the summer job postings to be useful," said one Scarborough Campus student, who had been previously unaware of the kinds of services the Career Centre had to offer.

SCSC Vice President, Vinitha Gengatharan, feels that this student is not alone: "Some students don't think to go there for employment, and instead, search on their own."

Gengatharan also believes that some students do not even realize that a Career Centre exists on the Scarborough Campus and, as a result, travel downtown to the one on the St. George Campus for career counseling.

"The Career Centre approached [SCSC] with the Career Launch because they wanted us to actively promote it...[the Career Centre] wanted to make sure students were aware of the service," said Gengatharan who, along with fellow SCSC members, assisted in providing those present with answers to questions. SCSC also encouraged students to attend by providing them with lunch.

"Initially, I just showed up for the food, but then I thought it might be a good idea for me to sign up," said another U of T at Scarborough student, referring to one of the various volunteer organizations engaged in recruiting individuals at the event.

"We asked the organizations to come because it is such an important part of building skills. It can really benefit students, obviously personally and career-wise as well," explained Morgan, who believes that although some students view volunteering as time-consuming, this is not the case. She contends that, in most instances, offering one's services constitutes a mere two hours a week.

As for the organizations, most representatives exhibited positive results. The Canadian Cancer Society, for example, signed-up enough students to fill three pages.

"[the organizations received] a good response," said Gengatharan, referring to full-day events allotted for the volunteer groups in the past. Gengatharan also feels that sometimes students think about volunteering but do not know how to go about doing so and believes that events like the Career Launch act as avenues in providing these opportunities.

"We're really pleased with the turn-out...we had a lot of students coming and asking questions, and that was the whole purpose of this event," said Morgan.

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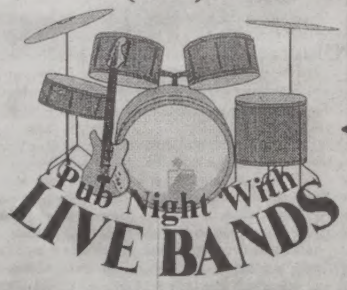

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NEWS

Violent crime just hype: says U of T study

Natasha Marshall
Staff

According to a recent research study conducted by U of T sociologist Rosemary Gartner, violent crime in Canada has decreased. However, the media, politicians, and some pressure groups continue to fuel a false perception that people in Canada should worry about their safety. Under this exaggerated impression, citizens within Canada have created a fear culture. Many people do not like leaving their homes anymore for an evening out because they are afraid of the possible consequences.

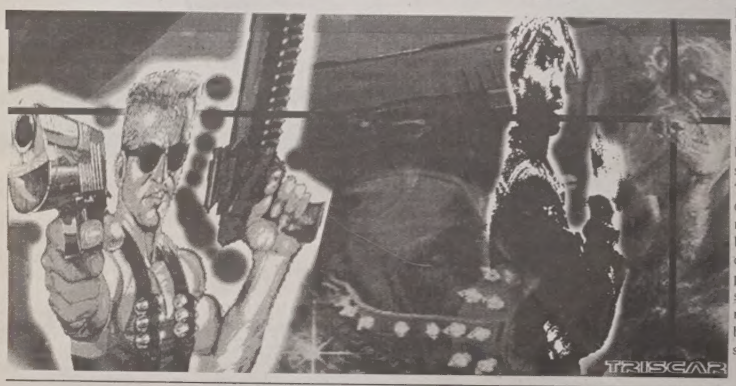
Although this may be the case, Gartner reassures everyone that the perception of violent crime is just media manipulation.

"While Canadians believe that violent crimes are increasing in frequency and severity, the statistics show that homicide rates, our most reliable measure of violent crime, are lower now than in the 1970s or 80s, " says Gartner.

According to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, figures presenting the most extreme form of any violent crime can be misleading. Often times, the media, and politicians present numbers that Canadians typically misinterpret.

Gartner explains, "the blame for this incorrect perception rests with politicians who score political points with a tough on crime stance and [the] prominence of [news] stories about crime, [which] highlight statistics that can be misleading."

Whether it is the mass media, political figures, or interest groups, all three of these driving forces in society benefit from the scare tactics they employ. The media gains attention and political figures receive greater support.



John Hannigan, a sociology professor at Scarborough, stresses that "one classical example for newspapers to boost their circulation is to present crime stories....Crime news is big....Crime shows are big." Generally, nobody wants to read an article about everyday life; they want something with substance about occurrences that are out of the ordinary.

Hannigan continues: "Common crime, like ordinary break-in-and-enter, are relatively low...it is much more exciting to read about certain violent crimes, although [that figure] is down."

Even though the media, political figures, and victim activist groups help to heighten the issue to more than what it is, ordinary citizens are also at fault. Many people indulge themselves with the violent images presented by the United States, and they perceive it as a Canadian reality.

"People in Canada read and watch a lot of American media and they sometimes get confused on what happens in Canada," states Hannigan.

In actuality, the public continues to be misled into believing that their immediate environment is not safe. In most cases, people just need to be aware of their surroundings, exercise good judgement and not to buy into the hype.

Charge against APEC protester dropped

Sarah Galashan
CUP-Vancouver

Two weeks before a trial was scheduled to begin, an assault charge against a high profile anti-APEC activist has been dropped. Former University of British Columbia student Jaggi Singh learned last week that the charge against him was officially withdrawn.

Singh was the only one of more than 50 protesters who continued to face a charge after the November 1997 Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation summit ended. His charge stemmed from a Nov. 7, 1997, anti-APEC protest held in the backyard of UBC president Martha Piper's home.

Dave Goodrich, a former UBC assistant patrol manager, alleged Singh had damaged his eardrum by yelling at him through a megaphone at close range. But Singh wasn't arrested until the day before the APEC summit began, more than two weeks after the alleged megaphone incident. He was released later that day on a promise not to return to UBC's campus, where he had been arrested. When Singh breached that condition, he was arrested again and spent the next four days in jail.

"Well it's done," Singh said upon learning the charge against him was dropped. "But in another sense it begs a whole bunch of other questions like why did I spend four days in jail and why was I nabbed?"

Singh says the answer to those questions can be found in documents released at the start of last year's RCMP Public Complaints Commission hearings. In one internal RCMP document, Staff-Sgt. Lloyd Plante said: "With the view towards eliminating some of the more high profile members of APEC Alert were commanding that these charges be laid."

Singh says Plante's comments suggest there was a clear attempt to stifle protest.

"Essentially the RCMP, under whose orders I don't know, took it upon themselves to create a sanitized, protest-free zone at UBC," he said. But Plante says campus RCMP officers were simply carrying out an arrest warrant.

"That was really the end of our involvement," he said.

Singh, who now lives in Montreal, says he plans to testify when the inquiry resumes hearing evidence in March. In the Meantime, Bruce Quayle, a lawyer for the City of Vancouver, confirmed that the city is pulling out of the inquiry because it is taking up too much time and money. Quayle said accusations by student complainants that the city is withholding incriminating documents are "outrageous."

Student Jonathan Oppenheim is convinced that's the reason why the city is pulling out.

"If they withdraw...then we don't have the power to procure documents from them," he said.

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All Letters to the Editor must be typed or printed and delivered to The Underground before noon, Friday. The length of the letters must be restricted to 200 words or less. The student's name and ID number must be included. Submission does not guarantee use.

Letters will be published on the basis of relevance and availability of space. The Editorial Board of The Underground reserves the right not to accept letters containing statements which could be construed as malicious or libelous. Material submitted will be edited at the discretion of the Board.

Opinions expressed in unsolicited material such as Letters to the Editor or commentary articles do not necessarily represent the views of The Underground, its staff members or the publisher. By submission, authors implicitly warrant that no liability for any loss suffered through typographic errors, headlines or editing of the copy will be attached to The Underground, its Editorial Board or the publisher.

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The Slipper War

The realist's perspective, however obscure

Red shoes. Slippers, actually. It all comes down to those two pristine, shining articles of footwear. No *Oz* allusion here. Nothing like that. The slippers, ornate and and altogether beautiful, are symbols of something far greater. He who wears the slippers (forgive the female exclusion) rules the kingdom. By rule, I mean control. And by control, I mean complete control. Every aspect. Every groove, line, phrase, and metaphor. A Big Brother of sorts; there is a *1984* allusion here.

The battle for the slippers has long been fought, endured, accepted as a bonafide ideal. There are two sides, naturally. Although, there is no clear good or evil candidate. Both sides are essentially identical. Both make promises. Both kiss babies. Both raise their arms in a 'V.' Their motives, their reasons, their campaigns: all so very similar. They prefer surgical and ideological implementation to waves of passion and embraces. The battlegrounds: any city, any structure, any individual. And the slippers are the ultimate prize. The supreme token.

Now let us suppose that entity A, we will name it Sofar, defeats its oppostion, which we will refer to as Sogood (in keeping with the rhythm). Surely, a victory would stall the mechanism. But this is not true at all. This machine, this engine, continues to thrive, Sofar as one cog, Sogood as one wheel. What is true: the slippers have not been claimed.

A lesson for all students. The slippers do not secure victory; they represent it. Winning the slippers does not win the war. Winning the war wins the slippers. Now let us suppose, again, that one of the battlegrounds, a structure with firm beliefs populated by anti-war activists and informed leaders of its own, stands in opposition to the battle. Let us suppose that the structure is a barrier that refuses, unconditionally, all aspects of the battle, including the benefits. ("Benefits?" you ask. Indeed, this war is different from its conventional counterparts. This war lavishes gifts upon its battlegrounds. It throws paper at the innocents, the bystanders.) What will happen then? Well, the battle will continue, I assure you. It will move to another locale. It will rage on like an unstoppable downpour.

Until, of course, someone claims the slippers.

How to raise your child:

Arthur grew up in a small house with both Parents. At age three, he drew a Picture of his small house, complete with blue windows, smoking chimney, green roof, and open garage door. Seeing the work, Mother lifted her hands in the air and praised the heavens for blessing her with such a gifted child.

When he was 11, Arthur, now enrolled in a very private private School where he was surrounded with other Prodigies, drew another Picture. A lake this time. He captured its colour, its shimmer, its shore. Father found it, framed it, and hung it on the front door to welcome all neighbours and alert them to his son's marvellous talent.

At the age of 20, having reaped the benefits of the finest education from the finest Instructors, Arthur fell in love with henrietta, a girl who worked at the local grocery store. Apalled and deeply upset, Mother and Father forbade any further involvement with a 'creature' so 'beneath' him. Arthur wept in frustration, but he never visited henrietta again.

One year later, Arthur was walking with Mother and Father as he caught a glimpse of a shining automobile, quickly approaching. Family stood on the edge of the curb, admiring. "One day you'll be behind the wheel of a car like that. Son, we have done it all for you. We have given you everything, nurtured your talent. You will conquer the world for us. You will make us proud." The accompanying slap on Arthur's back sent him, unprepared, stumbling into the street.

The car was a black Mercedes. Vintage.

Tim Soucie

Warning: Writing for The Underground will not change your mind

Letters...

Dear Editor,

As the saying goes, "There is his side, her side and the truth."

If you did not attend the January 22nd performance of the Funk Da Fide Extravaganza, you will never completely know what went on as for the showcase of Talent, Beauty and Fun. If this were Star Search 1999, this article probably wouldn't have been written due to the fact that 'those' types of performers have something to prove to the world. The only thing that these performers had to do was entertain their fellow students, family and friends.

If you, like many other students depended on the article written last week in the Underground, as a review of the show you might want to reconsider that. That article (just as this one) portrays only one person's opinion, which is never really enough. Charles Mitchell's analysis of the Fashion Extravaganza apparently missed the point of the whole event. In a world that already puts too much emphasis on bran and beauty, the organizers weren't trying to produce any Tyra Banks, Nikki Taylors, or Tyson Beckfords. Nor were they attempting to put on a million-dollar production. What they were striving for, was to generate a show in which people could come together, enjoy themselves and have a few good laughs. Hence the name Funk Da Fide 'Extravaganza', not 'Fashion Show'.

Mitchell and I do agree on one thing, as many of the performers and audience members may have noticed; there were acts which could have been a had more spirit, zeal, or even vitality, but this is a part of the leaming experience. Also many of the performers were first time participants of the show. They either saw, or heard about the success of last year's show and decided to give it a try. With that in mind, many of these people learned how to Salsa, Kick-Ball Change or ironically even model for the first time. Of course there will always be people who will be more noticeable than others, like Mitchell's mention of Kamaria 'Hoo', Anna Russo, Nathifia Grier and company. Although, what about those unsung heroes? Does the name Kimberly Tull ring a bell? She was one of the Co-Producers of the show, who did not get any credit for the role she played. Although it may have been unintentional, the absence of her name was a slap in the face. As a matter of fact, she just as equally as all the participants in the show (stage crew included) were not given just deserts. We all know what it is like to have worked on something assiduously and then not get any merit for it. Well Mitchell, I'm not one to really 'rag' on anyone, but I will point out their mistakes in the most subtle manner possible. Next time you want to play Siskel & Ebert, the only thing I ask is to make sure you have the facts, and don't exaggerate things that are beyond people's control.

If you truly want to know how the show was ask your friends who attended. It is more likely that their opinions will better reflect yours than any review will ever come close to. As for you Charles... didn't your mommy ever tell you, 'if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say it at all?!'

Natalie Carpenter

OPINIONS

The opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily correspond with those of The Underground

Our Plastic Friends...or Tyrants in disguise?

Mezba Uddin Mahtab
Staff

Credit cards are an undeniable fact of today's lifestyle. With the advent of credit cards, consumers can now spend money they have yet to earn. It protects against inflation; a person does not need to save money, only to have the price of the good go up each year. To some degree, credit cards are safer than cash. A credit card is also useful in emergency cases, due to a sudden need for cash when it is not available. Credit cards, depending on the issuing bank, also provide for other useful features such as insurance, warranties, coverage, which rids of the need for costly insurance premiums.

Yet it is the same purchasing power which can prove to be a double-edged weapon. The temptation is always there to spend what one does not have. The urge to use the credit card just for the sake of "being cool". Each cent paid by credit is a cent added to the "Big L".

The "Big L" is the "Big Loan" we students carry on our shoulders when we graduate. In Canada, student debt levels are perhaps at its peak not. An average of $75,000 per student is a sizable load to repay, especially with the accumulating interest every year. A normal university graduate earns $40,000 per year. With this amount, he has to support himself and his family. He also has other loans on his mind, perhaps of a car and a house. His life, from the moment he starts his university life, is doomed to be a life of loans and debts. The Big L.

By the time he has repaid all loans and is free to enjoy the amenities of life, he is too old to do so. The situation is even worse for females and minorities in the community, who also has to cope with discrimination in work. All this leads to one short-term solution to the financial crisis: credit cards.

All over Scarborough campus we have application packages for six or more cards at one go. Credit card companies are eager for us students to sign up with them. And why not? We present an unlimited potential for spending. They are eager for us to slide more into debt, which means more money for them. They know we still have our life ahead of us, a life of loans to pay them with. My uncle, when he came to Canada as an immigrant with no job, had difficulties getting a credit card, even though he had several in the Middle East. But his son, also jobless, but a U of T first year, immediately got three cards with ease, even though he was living off his dad's wealth.

Personal credit rating in today's society is not a virtue; it's a necessity. Restraining tuition costs create the need for extra purchasing power. Credit cards are not a bad thing; they are inevitability. Which leads to the question, how much is too much?

I feel the use and issue of credit cards should be restricted. There should be a quota on the number of credit cards a student can own. This will have other good outcomes in addition to limiting the spending power of students. With students turning selective in their credit cards, banks will have to become more competitive with their credit cards, and thus we students shall benefit. It's time someone in authority tackled the "Big L" at the roots.

SAC ELECTIONS 1999

DATES TO REMEMBER

Nominations Open:	**Monday, February 8, 1999**
Nominations Close:	**Friday, February 26, 1999**
Nominations Re-open (for vacancies only)	**Monday, March 1, 1999**
Nominations Close:	**Friday, March 5, 1999**
Campaigning Begins:	**Monday, March 8, 1999**
Scarborough Election Forum:	**Monday, March 15, 1999**
St. George Election Forum:	**Tuesday, March 16, 1999**
Erindale Election Forum:	**Wednesday, March 17, 1999**
Campaigning Ends:	**Sunday, March 21, 1999**
Polling Day:	**Tuesday, March 23, 1999**
Polling Day:	**Wednesday, March 24, 1999**

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UTM	**Room 166 of the North Building**
Scarborough	**Room R-3006**

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University College	4
New College	3
Innis College	1
Trinity College	2
St. Michael's College	4
Woodsworth College	1
Erindale College	6
Scarborough College	5
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Dentistry	1
Physical Education	1
Occupational & Physical Therapy	1
Nursing	1
Law	1
Education	1
Medicine	1
Music	1
Pharmacy	1
Architecture	1
Transitional Year Program	1

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO STUDENTS' ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

NEWS

Website matches students with Scholarships

Mezba Uddin Mahtab
Staff

Debt Week at Scarborough College created awareness of rising tuition and increasing student debt load at graduation. Since 1980, the average cost of post-secondary education in Canada has risen by more than 115%. Graduate debts have more than tripled to $75,000. Now more than ever, students are on the lookout for student awards, bursaries and scholarships. Such grants have become the first place to turn, as they do not have to be repaid.

Canadian universities, colleges, government agencies, private organizations and individuals annually sponsor thousands of student awards, the majority of which are available to average students. Yet, tens of thousands of dollars remain unclaimed every year. The problem seems to lie with the difficulty that students face when searching out the appropriate scholarships for which they are eligible to apply. A comprehensive search of all the awards is even more difficult.

December 2nd saw the launch of a new, innovative web site, **www.studentawards.com**, which aims to match students with the proper financial grants at absolutely no cost. Relatively young for a web page, it has already reported a registration of more than 10,000 students. Once a student completes signing-uponline, which includes a detailed questionnaire of more than thirty five characteristics regarding the student's academic history, recreational activities and extra-curricular interests, the site's search engine matches the profile with all available scholarships. The list of awards matched is then delivered to a personal, password-protected mailbox, which is updated frequently.

"The idea was developed when we encountered summer students working for us complaining about the non-availability of scholarship funds," Joe Freedman, President of the web page, said. "We sent out thousands of letters, emails and telephone messages to award sponsors, in order to list them on our database. The response has been excellent."

Freedman says information on many of the awards listed in studentawards.com's database cannot be found in many university calendars.

The homepage hired people from student consulting and loan programs to assist in the development of the site. Freedman asserts that it is a private, wholly Canadian organization with no ties to any banks or other financial institutes profiting from student loans.

Last year's chair of University of Toronto's Governing Council, Anthony Comper, was also the President and Chief Operating Officer at the Bank of Montreal. Student groups lobbied for his resignation as the Council was deciding on tuition and loan polices.

"It's a problem for an individual who stands to profit from high tuition and student debts to make decisions on tuition increases," says Wendy Hulko, Vice President of the Graduating Student Union at the time.

No such conflict of interest exists with **www.studentawards.com**. Stewart Stein, the Director of Business Development at the web page, said, "Sure, we receive corporate sponsorship. But there is no person on the decision making committee of the web site who has ties with any corporation, banks or other financial institution." He emphasized that the search engine was independent and solely devoted to students and awards.

Freedman urged students to take advantage of this free grant-matching search engine. Future plans will include information on student loans, but Freedman states the site will remain focused exclusively on student awards and other "free money." He calls the site simple yet effective, and free.

Studentawards.com is Canada's only comprehensive free award web site. It has already garnered praise from students, universities and government agencies alike. Freedman sites the schoolnet web site of Industrial Canada, which reads, "If you are looking for money to help pay for post-secondary education, www.studentawards.com is the place to go."

University educated exodus to U.S. a myth

Alex Bustos
CUP - Ottawa

There is little evidence Canada is suffering a mass exodus of talented workers to the United States, federal government figures show. In fact, a large number of educated workers are coming into the country from around the world, contributing to a "brain gain" rather than a "brain drain," the study suggests.

According to the unpublished Statistics Canada report completed last October, approximately 32,800 university-educated people immigrated to Canada annually between 1990 and 1996. In contrast, only 8,500 Canadians with post-secondary education left each year to the United States. In other words, every year Canada gained almost four times the number of educated workers than it lost.

"And those numbers are very conservative," said Scott Murray, a Statistics Canada researcher and author of the report.

"The U.S. output numbers are overestimated, while the immigration figures are underestimated."

More specifically, the study also showed that more people with master's and Ph.D. degrees immigrated to Canada than left here for the U.S. The only sector where international immigration did not outstrip emigration to the United States was health.

In a brief paper released last Wednesday, the left-wing Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives argued doctors and nurses are moving south of the border because health cuts and salary caps are making it difficult to practice in Canada. The short paper also stated that fiscal conservatives who demand tax cuts to combat the so-called brain drain are fighting a fictitious battle.

"This (government) study was an effort to inject reality into the debate on the brain drain," said Seth Klein, director of the group's B.C. office.

But according to a right-wing think-tank, the Statistics Canada study is flawed.

"It is very flimsy mathematics they are employing," said Walter Robinson,executive director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. "The brain drain is real. Yes, there is a small number of professionals leaving to the United States, but they're impact on our tax base is huge."

Citing a study by the C.D. Howe institute, Robinson pointed out that in 1996, 8, 600 highly skilled managers and professionals moved permanently to the United States. In the same year, roughly 44, 000 high-skilled workers went to work down south on temporary visas. A high-skilled worker was defined as someone making $70,000 or more per year. If you look at the $70,000 plus tax bracket, argued Robinson, you realize that even though this group makes up only 6 per cent of all taxpayers, they contribute 31 per cent of all tax revenue.

Women's studies class throws info fair

Jacquelyn Berry
Staff

Last Wednesday afternoon in the meeting place, the first year Women's Studies class held an Information Fair. An Information Fair is similar to a science fair in elementary school. A topic is researched and the information one finds and concludes is presented. Some of the topics displayed affect both sexes, but each topic concentrated particularly on the issues affecting women. The topics ran from the safety of tampons to female genital mutilation to women and AIDS. The purpose of the fair was not only for the benefit of the students in the class, but to raise everyone's awareness of ever prevalent social, physical, and emotional issues surrounding women at the turn of the millenium.

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2. A photocopy of all University of Toronto transcripts and a CGPA of 2.5
3. Two non-academic reference letters must be submitted with your package. Additionally, one reference must be provided for every activity demonstrated. Indicate the name, address, and telephone number for each.

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Scarborough, ON M1C 1A4

Application Deadline is Friday March 5th, 1999 at 5pm

**THE SAC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME IS NOT OPEN TO SAC EXECUTIVE, SAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS OR PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS OF THE SAC SCHOLARSHIP

NEWS

Federal bill recognizing same-sex spouses defeated

Erin Fitzpatrick
CUP - Ottawa

A private member's bill that would have changed the definition of the word spouse to include same-sex couples in all federal laws died in the House of Commons last week. The proposed Bill C- 239 was introduced by Bloc Quebecois member of parliament, Riel Menard.

"I'm convinced that there's something very discriminatory in our treatment of same-sex partners," Menard said after the bill died on the House floor last Tuesday.

"The Canadian government needs to accept that there are men who love men, women who love women, and that those people are in real, authentic relationships that deserve to be recognized."

In .1995, the government passed Bill C-33, which effectively outlaws discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. However, about 70 federal laws remain that still define spouses as a heterosexual couple.

"We've already recognized that we can't discriminate against gays, so the next step is to recognize their relationships as legitimate," Menard said. Because it was a private member's bill, Menard's initiative was not voted on, but only debated in the House of Commons for an hour. Private member's bills are only put to a vote if the MP behind them can convince an all-party committee or the entire House that the issue merits a vote.

Both the Reform and Liberal parties opposed the bill. Reform MP Eric Lowther defends his party's position.

"We look at the benefits that are there today for couples, and largely those benefits are there in recognition of the social contribution that couples make in procreation, and the rearing of the next generation of Canadians," he said. "That's in the public interest."

If the government is going to change the word spouse to include same-sex couples, Lowther said, it should first determine how the public interest would be served by such a move.

The effort to have same-sex couples recognized as spouses, however, didn't die with Menard's bill. New Democratic Party MP Svend Robinson, who supported the bill, says he plans to re-introduce it himself in the near future.

"It's a question of basic equality and fairness," Robinson said. "Gay and lesbian people are involved in committed loving relationships. I myself have had the good fortune of being involved in one for almost five years. And we're saying that our relationship should be recognized as equal, especially when opposite-sex common law relationships are recognized." But it's about more than just recognition, Robinson says. "It's also a question of justice. We pay taxes, we pay into benefit plans like the Canada pension plan, and we shouldn't be denied equality."

Robinson plans to re-introduce same sex bill

Liberals blame Harris for severed ties with federal government

LIBERAL *from page 1*

"I don't know anyone in that very hard to serve bracket, the most needy in our society, that are able to meet that kind of criteria," explained Caplan, referring to the Job Connect program.

The Liberals also promise a more favorable policy for employers to create student apprenticeships and an initiative that requires that at least one percent of new hirees to be young people.

With the possibility of Centennial College relocating to Scarborough Campus' outer parking lot, the MPP pushed for the strengthening of ties among colleges and universities.

McGuinty promises to bring back grant system

Caplan also discussed the most immediate issue facing students: rising post-secondary costs.

"At a minimum, tuition fees must be frozen," said the critic, stressing that the government must take greater steps to ensure that students do not graduate with an impossible debt load.

The Liberal party member promised to bring back a grant system to Ontario and to increase funding to part-time students. Although he highlighted rent control, he did not go into the specifics of debt-reducing measures that Ontario Liberal leader Dalton McGuinty is considering for students already facing loan repayments upwards of 30,000 dollars.

The politician addressed the platform of the Ontario New Democrat Party led by Howard Hampton. He was skeptical as to whether or not the NDP could deliver that promised ten-percent rollback on tuition, financed by rescinding Mike Harris' tax scheme.

"It's often a question of credibility. That wasn't the history when [Hampton] was in government," he responded, asserting that the NDP leader pledged those same funds to healthcare and to the homeless. "I think he spent [the money] about twelve different times."

Ontario is also the province with the least federal funding. The Liberals point the blame at the Harris' government for severed ties with the province and Chretian's administration.

"It's Harris and his crew who have been stumbling blocks in dealing with the federal government," he concluded, noting that his party can work more effectively with the Prime Minister's office.

Last year Anthony Comper, Chair of the Governing Council of U of T, resigned, amidst calls from student groups for his removal. Critics charged that Comper was in a conflict of interest in light of his position as president of the Bank of Montreal. The financial institution's record profits are due partly to its 500 million-dollar private student loan program. Caplan contends that he sees no problem with big business sitting on the governing councils of universities and claims that private student loans are a money-losing venture for banks.

"I think there's a role for banks. I think there's a role for community members. I think there's a role for educators. I think there's a role for faculty. I think there's a role for students to govern the affairs of the institution," said the politician.

Knowing that voter apathy for those under thirty-five falls around the 35 percent mark, Caplan encourages university students to vote.

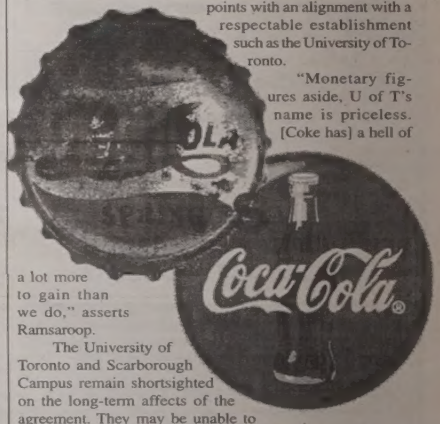
"I think that it will often come down to policy. If somebody has a policy and a mission that is going to speak to young people and get them vitalized, I think it could happen," he alleges, believing that youth have a stronger voice in government than they realize.

U of T, the next battleground for PepsiCo and Coca Cola

COLA, *from page 1*

withheld if sales do not reach a set quota.

The association of University of Toronto with a company like Coca Cola is another area of concern. The corporation does not have a reputable track record. The beverage manufacturer has accrued past human rights violations. A teamsters union alleges the possibility that Minute Maid, a trademark of Coke, engaged in child labour production tactics in Brazil. The SAC President believes that the corporation gains points with an alignment with a respectable establishment such as the University of Toronto.



"Monetary figures aside, U of T's name is priceless. [Coke has] a hell of a lot more to gain than we do," asserts Ramsaroop.

The University of Toronto and Scarborough Campus remain shortsighted on the long-term affects of the agreement. They may be unable to deal with changes and demands in product consumption in the next five years if they are locked into a contract.

OPIRG (the Ontario Public Interest Research Group), the GSU (the Graduate Students' Union), and SAC fear the alliance succeeding will lead to campus corporatization. Currently, these organizations have not mobilized against the agreement but future protests remain a definite possibility.

"There is a reason we are a public institution: we are publicly funded. We are not here to serve corporate interests," said Ramsaroop.

Whether U of T and Scarborough Campus will become an advertising playground resides in the hands of the University's finance executives on the St. George campus. Student leaders remain skeptical of their influence on the final resolution.

Although students will retain control over course selections, choices in beverage consumption remain another matter.

COLUMNS

A Cure For AIDS may be coming soon

Karen Heath
Staff

Sometime during our lives, it has been said that we will know someone infected with the HIV virus. At the present time, there is no cure for AIDS– there are only drugs to slow down the progression of the virus, obviously not a bona fide solution. However, this may change. Only a few days ago it was announced that the origin of the HIV virus has been uncovered. Perhaps by this discovery a cure may be found.

Researchers from the University of Alabama have announced that the origin of AIDS is from chimpanzees. They have been able to deduce through present-day testing that the virus spread from chimps to people in Africa. This transmission likely occurred through the consumption of infected meat. The virus appears to remain benign in the chimpanzees. The only chimps found to carry the disease live in the wild – not in zoos. This is because baby chimps raised in captivity cannot engage in sexual activity with wild infected chimps.

Currently, 35 million people are infected worldwide. Now that the origin has been discovered maybe the next step is finding a cure. What do chimps have that allow them to live with this disease without it killing them? Is it something in their diet? Perhaps something naturally occurring in their environment that they come in contact with? Or just an enzyme that acts as a barrier to the virus? Only time will tell, and with any luck, a cure will become available.

Y2K Still Bugging Us

Vernon Appadoo
Contributor

As the millenium quickly approaches, we face the arduous task of preparing ourselves for the Y2K phenomenon. For those us of who are unaware of the problem, it involves a seemingly harmless method used by computers to represent the year's date with the last two numbers. For example, 1999 would be expressed as 99. Decades ago, computer memory was scarce and expensive, and minimizing keystrokes was an efficient way for programmers to conserve space. This method of representing dates was thought to be temporary, as programmers were convinced that the software they were writing would become obsolete by the millenium. Unfortunately, this notation was preserved long after the constraints of computer memory was a concern, and is now beginning to show adverse effects on our computer and information systems.

The core of the Y2K problem arises when the clocks switch from 1999 to 2000. Since the date is represented by the last two numbers of the year, 2000 will be represented as 00. By default, most computers would recognize this as 1900 and not 2000. Although this may seem harmless, the problem occurs when we consider how much we depend on accurate time frames. For example, banks that calculate interest on a bank account require an accurate time reference. If this is obscured by the Y2K glitch, it will result in inaccurate interest calculations. The problem could be fatal in some cases. For example, a doctor using medical software to calculate the appropriate dosage of a drug for an infant born in 2000, might receive results for a person who is a 100 years old. The dosage may be fine for an adult, but is deadly to an infant.

But these are just projected problems that we foresee. Some corporations have already experienced Y2K problems. A recent poll has found that approximately 40% of North American and European Fortune 500 companies have suffered from some degree of Y2K failure.

But how are we dealing with the Y2K problem?

Currently there are three methods being used to cope with the Y2K problem. They are date expansion, windowing, and encapsulation. Windowing is the most popular of the three methods. Together, they comprise about 95% of all the Y2K projects being undertaken. Many corporations use a combination of all three methods to rid themselves of the Y2K problem.

The task of coping with the Y2K problem is certainly a Herculean one. It involves the concerted effort of many people to reach a solution to the problem. Although there have been exaggerated statements regarding the Y2K bug ranging from a permanent shutdown of electrical systems to a coming apocalypse, I am strongly confident in our abilities to deal with this task tactfully and effectively.

ATTENTION

would-be writers:

The Underground

needs people to write for news. So put your mad ass talent up to the task and contact the news

editor:
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WOMEN'S CORNER

Dusting feminism off the shelves

Risha A. Bhawanie
Contributor

Almost forty years have passed since the great Feminist Movement created a stir about women's rights and women's inequality. However, the word "feminism" has begun to collect dust, become almost ancient and has begun to lose its heroic image. Today, most teenagers and young adolescent people feel disgusted or insulted upon hearing the word "feminist." They immediately associate the word in their minds with "male bashing, angry females, or even females who wish to be males." Media, especially television, accounts for some of these tarnished and false images as well as the views of radical feminists. Even among our adult population, there are maybe just a few who can tell you the accurate meaning of "feminism." The rest of society has built up a defense mechanism or a way of ignoring this controversial word, which is a process similarly repeated for other "isms," such as "racism, lesbianism, nepotism, sexism, etc."

However, the Women's Centre at 3104 R-wing, is far from "male bashing, angry females, or females who wish to be males." On the shelves are various books ranging from "The History of Women," to "How to Stay Healthy," and even a book about "Relationships." There are colorful magazines and videos, which are informative about where and what to do in crisis situations, and how to help others in similar situations. As well, there are various pamphlets, ribbons, pins, and stickers that provide knowledge on how to overcome difficult issues such as violence, rape, eating disorders, and pregnancy. The room itself alleviates anxieties or nervousness, with its two comfortable love-seat couches. A white coffee table with Nescafe coffee, at the centre of the room, encourages thoughtful and informative conversation.

Most importantly, the Women's Center is a wonderful place to meet and mingle among new faces. Women of all ages, cultures, and races volunteer their time to help other women learn about themselves. Some are young, while others are old. Some are single, while others are married. Some play sports, write poetry and occasionally smoke. Others love to stay home, cook gourmet pasta and then tend to their plants. In other words, all biases and stereotypes are left outside of the door.

Finally, the Women's Center is not only a great place for women to learn about themselves and to help overcome issues they may face, but it is also a great place for men to learn about "the world of women." Men should realize that sexuality, abuse, emotions, and body image are important issues that they should become aware of, in order to form a closer bond with women. Moreover, general knowledge of women as a species can help men relate some of their experiences to a woman's in order to unite men and women together. The Women's Center has, without a doubt, kept to the true meaning of what the word "feminism" actually means since it first came about in the 60's. Feminism and its meaning, for the majority of society who remain naïve, and for those teenagers and young adolescence who watch too much television can only be thoroughly understood from *experience*!

BODY

Interfaculty Action For February 9th - 14th

Tuesday, February 9th			
7:30 PM	Mens B Basketball	vs Dents C	Scarborough Gym
7:40 PM	Waterpolo	vs Skule	Downtown 50 M Pool
8:00 PM	Womens A Volleyball	vs Meds	Downtown Campus, SG3
7:30 PM	Mens R Ice Hockeey	vs Lab Meds	Varsity Arena
Wednesday, February 10th			
8:00 PM	Womens Indoor Soccer	vs Victoria Vipers	Downtown Campus, FHN/S
9:00 PM	Mens Indoor Soccer UNITED	vs Eng	Downtown Campus, FHN/S
9:00 PM	Mens A Squash	vs MBA II	Scarborough Courts
9:00 PM	Mens B Squash	vs MBA II	Downtown Courts, 4 - 6
Thursday, February 11th			
9:00 PM	Mens A Squash	vs Knox Rocks	Downtown Courts, 1 - 3
10:00 PM	Mens B Ice Hockeey	vs UTM B	Varsity Arena

Stayin' Alive!

The Truth About Marijuana

Teddy Bercovici
Staff

The use of marijuana has been debated for many years. It has been used for medicinal, religious, and social purposes for thousands of years, much like tobacco and alcohol. However, there are many issues to deal with, like the legalization debate that has been continuing for many years.

Much like alcohol, the cause they cause a physical addiction because of the nicotine content. Marijuana on the other hand, has been proven to cause psychological addiction. People use it as a crutch, and smoke up to get away from their problems. As with any substance, even sugar, it's not a good way to go and is simply substituting one problem for another. I've seen many people try to escape by toking up a lot, and after the high dies down, they do it some more. Eventually they are high all the time, and when that's not enough, it has been shown people may go to hardcore drugs.

drug is not very harmful in small amounts. Many people do overdo it however, and that is when the problems begin. Understanding the effects and the consequences is a great deal. It is now considered illegal, except for in Amsterdam where you can toke up in a coffee shop. It's hard to say whether or not it can be considered "bad" for you. I guess its effects are different than any other legal drugs. One of the main effects of marijuana is that it works like a relaxant, and helps calm people down. I think that's pretty much the main usage, much like a drink. Cigarettes have different effects be-

The physical effects are yet to be determined. For the past few decades people have studied it, and often come up empty-handed. Some have concluded that it causes low sperm count, short term memory loss, lung function problems, development problems during pregnancy, and many others. It has been used for medicinal purposes for glaucoma, asthma (ironic eh?), leukemia, and generally as an anaesthetic. No truly conclusive evidence is available, with the exception of an increase in lung

It's very difficult to say who should and who shouldn't smoke up, because it's a very touchy subject. It's also a big problem, but not generally among the "smart users." Marijuana use becomes truly serious when used in excess. Much is known about the drug, but there is a lot of information which must still be collected if the government is to make an infromed decision..

There is a wide variety of marijuana available out there, much of it is not "pure" (mixed with other drugs). Therefore it's hard to know what you get when you toke. Anyone who even thinks about getting high they should know what they are getting in to, and make a serious effort to remain in control of themselves. Just because it's not a drink, it doesn't mean it has the same effects as a cigarette.

If you have any questions or comments, e-mail me: teddy_bercovici@tvo.org

BIG LEAGUES

Ted Christou
Health and Fitness Editor

At the half-way point on the NHL season, it is interesting to look back at the rule changes the league made several months ago, and see how they turned out. It seemed at first, that it would be the goaltenders who would be the most affected.

During the summer, the NHL established strict equipment standards for the coming season, essentially outlawing oversized pads and gloves. League watchdogs will be roaming the rinks with a measuring tape, looking for offenders. The goal line also has been moved out two feet from the end boards to 13 feet, a modification that should increase the number of offensive opportunities.

The extra room makes it more difficult for the goalie to stop the puck. On several dump-ins already this season, the goaltenders were trying to get out to stop the puck and could not get to it. The offensive players have an advantage in that they have more rome to make the play, and avoid defencemen trying to pin them into the corner.

The goal crease also has been reduced. The sides of the crease have been lopped off, making it easier for a skater to get close to the goalie without stepping into the crease and being nailed for the in-the-crease rule.

With all the focus that was put on increasing goal-scoring, it is interesting to note that the statistics show little change. As a matter of fact, goaltenders like Arturs Irbe, Ron Tugnutt, and Jimmy Waite have been able to resurrect their careers. Other goalies like Patrick Roy struggled to get out of the starting blocks, but have now accustomed themselves to the changes. As a matter of fact, Roy was named the NHL's "player of the month" for January.

It will be interesting to see the long-term effects of the rule changes. While more offence usually translates into more excitement for fans of the sport, the stars of the season thus far have been the goalies. Curtis Joseph is making an excellent bid to with the Hart Trophy as the Most Valuable Player. His backstopping has given the Leafs enough confidence to take more offensive chances, and they have consequently become the highest-scoring team in the league.

Expansion will add four new markets to the league in the next three years. While this will inevitably further water down the talent base, it does not necessarily have to translate into a less entertaining product on the ice. For the first time in over a decade, it appears that the governing body of the NHL is on track. Hockey is making its mark in the larger (and more profitable) U.S. market, and across the world. It has now truly become a "global game".

CULINARY ¢ENTS

Thoughts on Cooking...

Rolando Tecson Jr.
Staff

Well folks, I'm back from a short break. The tales of my demise while clutching a wok are not true. I'm back and full of food and recipes! Now, let me share something with you...

Are you fresh out of ideas? I know your situation. Sitting there, surrounded by sparse shelves wondering what to put together. Your mind and stomach are not in sync -- you can't think of anything to cook. Here's what I have from experience.

Generally, there're two ways of cooking. First, there's real cuisine cooking that involves actually sitting down and planning a meal. Preparation and purchasing essential ingredients are the key things here. This is if you need to impress someone like your girlfriend or her parents. However, most of us don't have the time to make a gourmet meal every evening.

Thus, Practical Cooking becomes the more familiar scenario for the half-starved University student. So, what's to cook? You have half a loaf of bread, two eggs and anything else you can scrounge up. Start by first assessing what you have left over. It's a simple question that helps you put two and two together quickly. The eggs go with the bread, fine. Now you're faced with the problem of making it taste like food. What's the best way to do this? Take what you know and expand. Almost anything goes. Mushrooms in omelettes? Why not. Now, if you're trying to get creative, here's an idea: take a common dish and screw around with it. As a rule of thumb, I take what I have and aim for what I want the meal to taste like. Then I go about adding the ingredients that will get me there. Try it. Ninety percent of the time, you'll actually turn out with something better.

Someone once said to me that they hate doing dishes. Best way to solve it: Make an Atomic Mess. Take whatever you have in the fridge and toss it on a piece of bread and nuke or toast it. Chances are, you get rid of leftovers, get all the nutrition you need, and still get a quick meal. If you're faced with moldy stuff and it's still salvageable...just eliminate any moldy pieces and use the rest. Note however, if you do choose this option, you may be asking for trouble. If you do not cut off enough of the mold, the bacteria will get you sick. The safest way to use your recovered food is to "absolutely" cook it. It must be piping hot to toast any left over bacteria. Rather desperate, but it works if you're in a pinch.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Upcoming talent Emm Gryner on music, signing, Tibet, and more

Aprile Nicholl
Contributor

Emm Gryner is without a doubt one of the most promising up and coming artists the Canadian music scene has to offer. A native of Forest, Ontario (think Sarnia), she grew up with classical piano lessons and a few Detroit radio stations which provoked an interest in music and making records. Her songs offer a certain openness, and it's not until I am talking with her that I realize she is just as open and honest in conversation as she is in her music.

So after I get over the initial shock of talking to my idol, the interview gets underway. I start by congratulating her on her recent Juno nomination. I wonder what being nominated means to her.

"Awards are funny things," she laughs, "but it's an honor to be nominated." A typical response, but what if she wins?

"It would be nice to win, but I am not planning on it," she insists. "I think Hayden has that covered."

But Emm is no stranger to victory. Only a few short years ago, she won a song-writing contest run by a Toronto radio station.

"That [the win] really helped. The contest was really good timing because I was working on my independent album at the time," she states. "Winning helped to put the album out and that record led to being signed."

The record she is describing is her first full-length album titled *The Original Leap Year*, which was produced and released by Emm herself on her own independent record label, Dead Daisy Records. Some fans have stated difficulty in obtaining a copy of this obvious rarity.

"It's out of print," she sighs, "but I think I've seen a few copies floating around." I thank her for all her help in the situation. She apologizes with laughter.

But, the signing she is speaking about is her record deal with the major U.S. record company, Mercury Records. The signing has definitely been a positive experience and has been responsible for opening up new avenues for Ms. Gryner.

"It has helped in terms of being able to go down into the States and tour the clubs," Emm continues. "I've found that I do have some American fans and that's encouraging." She's quick to point out that she has no intention of abandoning her Canadian roots.

"I tend to get a lot of support and radio play here," says Gryner. "I owe a lot to Kim." That's Kim Hughes of former Edge 102.1 fame she is referring to.

"Kim was open to having me on her show a couple of times, even before I had a record deal."

This record deal has also helped to enhance her latest effort *Public*, which was released this past August. For this album she made the decision to work with a producer.

"When I signed, I was still interested in the idea of producing the record myself," she states. "I made a demo but I didn't feel that there were any new ideas or energy being injected." This lack of new ideas led her to look for a producer who could help create something new. She also suggests that this experience was definitely a challenge.

"It was a real exercise in letting go," she says. "This was difficult because I was someone who has always been in her bedroom and in control. It helped to open my mind."

Growth and change seem to be a recurring theme with Ms. Gryner. Not only personally, but from a professional standpoint as well. She is very passionate about the movement to free Tibet, a movement that she believes in wholeheartedly. Her main goal is to create awareness in the public about the current situation.

"I know that this cause is a popular one, but I am not just jumping on the bandwagon," she insists. "It is just my little way of creating awareness."

Upon hearing this, I ask her why she chose not to have her records sold in China and if this was perhaps a risky move for a new artist."

"I put that clause in my contract with a grain of hope that the situation would eventually see some change," she suggests. "It wasn't done to limit myself so much as to hopefully see some change and then I would eventually feel good about having my records sold in a place where there has been some political progression."

After hearing all of this, I begin to recall a piece I read earlier. It described Emm's difficulty writing when she was happy. I wonder if indeed all this career advancement has threatened her song writing ability.

"I think that the perception is that when you get some success that you do become happy and in fact that is usually not the case," she insists. "I have to say that I am happy with the attention but, there are always challenges that go along with success. All these other things and the way people perceive you and how the business is going. The bad stuff doesn't end, in fact it tends to build up."

So, no threats to the song writing. I am relieved in an odd sort of way. But, does all this mean that she sees herself as successful?

"I don't equate success with commercial success," Emm insists. "But I am happy to be out on tour and to be writing songs, All of this is a definite character builder."

As for the future of music…

"I'm not exactly sure where it's headed," she wonders. "But I think it may be more pop like, similar to the eighties." Minus the acid wash and bad haircuts I hope. We both laugh at that perspective.

So, after all of this excitement, I am thrilled at the prospect of seeing her perform live. She tells me that I can expect a really intimate, personal experience. I'm thrilled. So, for those of us who weren't fortunate enough to have Leaf tickets on February 13, head on down to Nathan Phillips square, for the opportunity to see Emm Gryner open herself, to the public.

Greek comedy goes awry

Nadia Alam
Staff

"Xerxes. A Canadian presentation of a Greek comedy about a Persian King set in England to German music." Who could resist such a promisingly entertaining advertisement for an opera? Certainly, not I. So off I went to view my very first baroque opera at the Hummingbird Centre for the Performing Arts. Xerxes was better than I had anticipated.

Xerxes is the Persian king, who falls madly in love with Romilda, a noblewoman who is secretly in love with the king's brother, Arsamene. At the same time, Romilda's sister, Atalanta, is also harbouring feelings of the romantic kind towards Arsamene. To round off our cast of crossed-lovers at cross purposes, there is Amastre, a princess formerly betrothed to Xerxes, who has come, incognito, to try and learn what has caused her lover to jilt her. Last but not least, there is Elviro, Arsamene's helpful, hilarious servant.

The plot reads like a lame daytime soap, as is usually the case with operas, or so I am told. Indeed, the beauty of the opera lies in the way in which the no-brainer story line is presented or sung. With that in mind, Xerxes is a music lover's fantasy. The arias were breathtaking, the duets, captivating. It was hard not to be carried away by the talented and distinguished cast. Kimberly Barber (Xerxes), Kathleen Brett (Romilda), David Daniels (Arsamene), Doug MacNaughton (Elviro), Susannah Waters (Atalanta),

and Phyllis Pancella (Amastre), all presented an expression and depth in their vocals that was awesome.

The story could have run the risk of being ludicrous; the king who used his power to try and force love, the sister who used deceit to win love, the lover who sought vengeance for a broken heart—it all seems a bit much. However, it was saved from being dull and overly dramatic by the servant, winningly played by Elviro. MacNaughton's comic timing was exceptional; he played his character with an exuberant gaiety that made the opera fun.

Stephen Wadsworth, director of Xerxes, modernized the opera in that instead of being set in ancient Persia, the story took place in some unnamed rural corner of 18th century England. The set consisted of a red brick country house, shaded by a large, realistic tree, all very charming and very detailed. The pastoral music agreed with the setting. The orchestra was very discreet, the instruments melding seamlessly to complement the voices of the singers.

In fact, my only complaint would be that I would have preferred the opera sung in Italian, the way Handel originally penned it. Although the work was aptly translated by Stephen Wadsworth, the director, English doesn't seem to be a language that lends itself to operas. At times, the language seemed so stilted, that it interfered with the enjoyment of the music. Unlike rolling and soft tones of the Italian language, English is too abrupt to suit the melodious nature of the opera.

Overall though, Xerxes was an enjoyable romp that left me chuckling. As far as this viewer was concerned, it deserved every "Bravo!" yelled out during the standing ovation at its end.

SOUL

Calling back the dead

Zoe Cook
Contributor

Ann Granger can surely call the dead back from the grave with her most recent release *Call the Dead Again*. The highly acclaimed British author follows in the footsteps of her previous whodunits with this sparkling, spine-tingling and savvy tale of sleuthing in the British Cotswolds. From first to last, Granger exploits her talent for combining crime writing with comedy, transporting her readers into a world of intrigue, romance, trickery and, of course, murder. With the turn of each page, the plot thickens, twisting and spiraling, only adding to the splendor of Granger's creation, making *Call the Dead Again* her best yet.

Call the Dead Again is yet another chapter in the lives of Meredith Mitchell and Alan Markby, residents of the tiny town of Bamford located in the picturesque English Cotswolds. Meredith Mitchell, an employee of the British Embassy and part-time super sleuth, is the intelligent, attractive and nosy companion of Alan Markby, the dapper superintendent of the local police force. Together they work tirelessly on the various "suspicious" crimes encountered in Bamford, brilliantly uncovering, layer upon layer, the facts of each crime.

In *Call the Dead Again*, Mitchell picks up a secretive, quiet, pretty young girl, hitchhiking on one of the lonely country roads surrounding Bamford. She drops the young girl off in front of the Tudor House, an historical manor at the edge of town. Owned by millionaire-lawyer Andrew Penhalow, the house is reputed to have a ghost haunting its grounds. Meredith is left with a distinctly uneasy feeling as she drives away into the night, wondering exactly what business such a young woman could possibly have at Tudor House at this time of night. Before she knows it, Penhallow turns up dead, and Mitchell and Markby are left with another murder on their plates.

Granger's latest puzzle is brilliantly crafted down to the last detail. Her careful characterization of Mitchell and Markby, along with others in the novel, elevate interest and add comedic undertones and depth to *Call the Dead Again*. Throughout its entirety, engrossing plot twists as well as perfectly placed snippets of information provide the reader with just enough suspense to keep him on the edge of his seat, aching to read on. *Call the Dead Again* is essentially an archetypal British murder-mystery, only Granger sets it up in perfect tune for the readers of the nineties.

Call the Dead Again, with its wondrous dialogue, intriguing plot twists and endearing cast of characters, leaves the reader truly wanting more. Once again, Granger succeeds in sweeping the world away with her tales of mystery and murder in a small town. Granger's delightful and delicious writing style, along with her innate talent, soars in this piece, making *Call the Dead Again* a perfectly captivating crime story.

CULTURE CORNER

Lisa Fenton
Contributor

Discount Ticket Program
Want to see a great opera but intimidated by the ticket price? Why not check out the discount ticket program offered by the Cultural Affairs Office. We are always open to suggestions- if there is a show that you are interested in, but don't see it on the list, stop by the office (R-3010) and let us know.

Tickets for following shows are still available:

The Stone Angel
Canadian Stage Company
Fri, March 5,1999 8:00 p.m. $18

Il Trovatore
Canadian Opera Company
Sat, April 3, 1999 7:30 p.m. Note: this is a dress rehearsal $13

Swan Lake
The National Ballet of Canada
Fri, May 14,1999 8:00 p.m.
$43
No time to travel downtown? There are always a number of arts activities taking place on Campus. Stop by the office and pick up a Cultural Affairs Calendar for the list of "What's On" in February and March.

For further information please call the Cultural Affairs Hotline 287-7007.

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THE FRONT ROW

GLORIOUS? NOT QUITE.

Zoe Cook & Niki Pappas
Contributors

In her most recent effort to gain an Oscar-nod from the Academy, **Sharon Stone** takes on the role of Gloria. She's a street-smart, sexy and superficially hard-as-nails moll from the streets of New York. A remake of the original 1980's film starring **Gena Rowlands**, Stone's new release *Gloria* attempts to explore new-found dramatic presence and power on the big screen. Suprisingly enough, Stone's portrayal of the gritty Gloria is not half bad, evoking emotion-drenched scenes and a myriad of tears along with it. However, the film pales in comparison to the original, showcasing far too many seemingly talentless actors and forgetting those with actual penchant for performance. In the scheme of things, this film, though an entertaining two hours, isn't as glorious as it could be.

Sharon Stone once a ho always a ho!

Gloria follows the story of a woman (Stone) who has just been released from hard jail time in Florida after taking the wrap for her gangster-boyfriend Kevin (**Jeremy Northam**). Achting to return to New York, Gloria gets on a plane and journeys home. Upon her return, she disovers that Kevin and his thugs have taken over her apartment and she is essentially out of a life. Overhearing Kevin's plot to hurt a little boy, whose family he has just murdered in a mob deal, Gloria snatches the child. She plans to let him fend for himself as she is clueless with what to do with a little boy. However, chaos ensues as Kevin pursues the two throughout the city, and tough and thorny Gloria finds herself becoming increasingly attached to the little orphan. The script of this movie, though far-fetched, provides an entertaining premise for the audience. The film starts off well, enticing the viewers through understated humour and flashy performances by Stone. After the first hour though, all humour vanishes and the film seems pent upon convincing us of its dramatic plausibility. Scene after scene, the film continues bombarding us with tense and overwraught characters, essentially begging us to believe that *Gloria* is Oscar-worthy. The thing is, it isn't!

Performances by Stone and **George C. Scott** aid the cause a little, holding a base-interest in the film and keeping the audience from getting up and walking out. However, the talented actors are not used to the picture's full advantage. Scott appears briefly throughout the two hours, as does veteran **Cathy Moriarty**. Instead, the director focusses on cinematic lightweights **Jean-Luke Figueroa** (Nicky) and Jeremy Northam who give passable if not passionate performances. Perhaps had the acting-base been evened out a little more, *Gloria* would have surpassed its merely acceptable outcome.

Sharon Stone, though not at her best, essentially saves the film from being an excrutiating, grevious and bitter slice of cinematic entertainment. One wonders why they remade the movie in the first place. We are provided with a few touching takes at emotion, so the film is not a complete loss, but most of the time the picture becomes too big for itself and even for Stone's permed and puffy hairdo. Though *Gloria* takes an honest crack at becoming the next Oscar winner, it is far too obsequious in its search for dramatic appreciation. *Gloria* should have left well-enough alone and stuck with the original.

VIDEO PICKS

No one expects the Spanish Inquisition

Shaun Dhani
Staff

Are you tired of the media rotting your brain? Had enough with unstimulating entertainment? Waiting for an intelligent, provocative film, well this is definitely not it. Absurdity taken to the next level, Monty Python exists in a realm of hilarity of its own. In *The Search for the Holy Grail*, we have the Monty Python dumbells set in Medieval Times.

All the gags follow the plot of King Arthur banding together his knights of the round table, then going in search of the Holy Grail as instructed by God. Mind you, this Middle Age is unlike anything history class has taught. Serfs have political rants, knights travel along with minstrels and monsters debate rather than destroy. Scenes are connected by funny little animations by Terry Gillan, so hilarious they deserve a movie of their own. The humour is a thinly veiled criticism of social values both past and present with the biting satirical wit the British are known for. Monty Python are the original spoof artists and their resonance are still seen in their individual works such as *A Fish called Wanda* as well as some definitely less successful films. Although there are a couple running gags that tend to loose impact as the movie progresses it serves to emphasize the spontaneity of the one liners that will have you on the floor. The props are atrocious and the costumes not much better but in this movie they are all but superfluous to the comic genius of the actors. Comedy is often denied the level of authority given to drama, and more "serious" forms of acting. However, the Python cast show extreme versatility between characters that are exaggerated (understatement) and at the same time relative.

Lets face it, life's pretty serious, between school, work, bills and everything else, sometimes we can only afford to laugh. So if you want to sit around with three bafoons with a bowl full of popcorn and have a bellyfull of laughs this is a helluva way. If you want to explore the profanity of human existence, find something else. If you do heed my advice and rent this golden achievement of humour, please do yourself a favour. 1) Make sure you read the opening and (more importantly) the closing credits and 2) when the movie is finished sit in a corner and think about what you just did.

Boy meets Woman

Lisa Bell
Contributor

The new comedy *Rushmore* from director, **Wes Anderson**, isn't the usual boy-meets-girl kind of love story. The boy is just that, a 15 year old student (played by **Jason Schwartzman**). The girl is a grade one teacher (**Olivia Williams**) at the same school. The competition is a middle-aged, married, local contruction tycoon Herman Blume (**Bill Murray**). This adds up to a complex love triangle, believe it or not, with just the right amount of plot twists to keep the audience guessing. There is plenty of below-the-belt humour to keep the audience interested in this unbelievable story. Jason Schwartzman, in his first major production, plays Max Fischer, a nerdy, underacheiving student with a deviously clever mind.

Fathers, hide your daughters

As Max so aptly puts it, "War does funny things to men." This sums up the plot, without giving too much away. Max is a scholarship student at a private school, Rushmore. Max struggles for acceptance with the rich students by causing trouble and writing bizarre plays that shouldn't be done with a cast of 10 yr olds. Most of the entertainment value comes from the conflict between Max and Herman. It is absurd to think that a 15 year old would have a chance with a 30 year old woman, but Max doesn't think of himself as "too young". There are some touching scenes of affection between the teacher and Max, but they aren't too mushy, especially when he has cotton sticking out of a bloody nose.

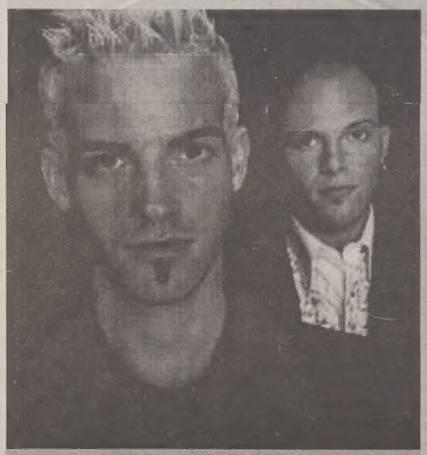
While Jason's acting was stellar in this flick, it was Bill Murray's role that stole the show. He played such a convincing slob (with scenes where he's smoking and drinking, as he jumps off of a diving board at his son's birthday party), it's proof that the old guy hasn't lost his comedic touch.

EAR TO THE GROUND

THE SKY IS FALLING

David Stewart
Contributor

Sky is a clean, polished, R&B-driven pop band from Canada's (at least it seems that way) hotbed of talent, Montreal. Montreal seems to be doing something right for its musical artists as it is producing some of the most unique, enjoyable and cutting edge material of late. The success of **Bran Van 3000**, **Prozzak**, and to a lesser extent **Centrifical Force**, has blazed a trail of recognition for Montreal artists. This holds extremely true for the immediate success of Sky's first single, "Some Kind of Wonderful." (There is no relation to the original.)



Sky: Aren't they Wonderful!

The songs on the album, *Piece of Paradise*, all reflect the stranger and twisted sides of love; one must not forget that this is a R&B duo underneath it all. Their sound, unfortunately, offers nothing new to the R&B scene which is truly a shame because of the off-beat lyrics. But on the plus side, they do follow the R&B sound formula to the letter and the result has to be compared with the sounds of **Boyz II Men**, **All 4 One**, amongst others.

The only major disappointment to the album is the Americanization of it. The song "America" offers a look into the pursuit of the American dream, passing it off as a dead-end. Antoine and James lend themselves to being a Canadian sell-out by singing songs like this and completely forgetting their roots and their Canadian identity. It is truly a sad day to see Canadian bands who must stoop to this level in order to attempt to sell a few more albums across the border in a country that is truly unappreciative of good music.

FAST TALK

Irini Shehata
Staff

Bad news for fans of Liverpool group the **Boo Radleys**: the band recently called it quits after almost two decades of being together. The split is by mutual agreement among all band members. Each intends to pursue other projects...**Madonna** is the latest to have sold out to Sony Signatures to create her own merchandise line. The California-based company also handles merchandising for other celebrities including **Kiss**, **Celine Dion** and **Mariah Carey**. The first product is set to be a watch, designed in collaboration with a Swiss company for which Madonna will lend her hand in advertising campaigns. No word on the design, logo or the release date...In a similar instance, rocker **Ozzy Osbourne** is set to have a new figurine of himself designed. The figurine, aided in design by the creator of **Spawn**, is slated for a summer release...*If I Could Turn Back Time-Cher's Greatest Hits* is a 17-track disc featuring many of **Cher**'s number one hits over the years will be released March 9. To complement the release *If I Could Turn Back Time-The Videos* will be released April 6. The releases come after the tremendous success of Cher's latest single "Believe"...**Greenday**'s front-man **Billie Joe Armstrong** has long been working on a side project, another band by the name of **Pinhead-Gunpowder**. Many have wondered whether the new group has the same edge as Greenday. You can find out on February 23 when the band's releases, a 7-track EP titled *Shoot The Moon*...The **Beastie Boys**, **Method Man** and **Wu-Tang Clan** are only some of the guests featured on legendary rapper **Run DMC**'s latest work, tentatively titled *Crown Royal*. The double CD set consists of an album of hits and another of new material. Scheduled for a May release, it's the first we've heard from Run DMC in over half a decade...Finally, in Toronto concert news, **DMX**, **Method Man** and **Jay-Z** are only some of the names dropping by on March 10 at the Air Canada Centre. Titled The Hard Knock Life Tour, critics have dubbed it as one of the best rap/hip-hop tours of 1999...

D-GENERATION BECOMES A DARK FORCE IN THE MUSIC SCENE

Steven Nurse
Contributor

The D-Generation is back with "Through the Darkness", the follow up album to their critically acclaimed first album "No Lunch". D-Generation have been offered to tour with bands such as Green Day, L7 and KISS. A darker album than "No Lunch", "Through the Darkness" offers a more eerie, sinister, against the grain approach to the issues at hand.

The album features a variety of catchy punkish tunes with numerous mind numbing repetitive catch phrases. Overall the album is enjoyable if you are into the punk scene. Highlight tracks of the album include "Lonely", "Sick On The Radio", "Sunday Secret Saints" and the kickoff track "Helpless" which is featured on the movie soundtrack for "The Faculty". You can visit www.dgeneration.com for further information on the band.

No Scarecrows Here

Omar Shah
Contributor

The Black Crowes released their fifth album entitled *By Your Side* (debuting on Columbia Records). This album requires some time to appreciate, or in plain terms "to sink in." At first, all the songs seem to sound more or less the same, but they gradually separate from one another. This separation takes place through the uniqueness of the lyrics of each song.

This album takes a different approach by mixing Rock , Blues and enthusiastic vocals. The first song I noticed beside their radio hit "Kickin' My Heart Around" was "Virtue and Vice". This song stands out in a class of its own with its harmony of music and vocals. There is also a song that can be directed to the Clinton Impeachment trial "No Time For Congregation."

However, leaving all their off stage controversies aside, their new album certainly has some good lyrics, thanks to the Robinsons Brothers (Chris and Rich). This album is definitely worth a listen. On a scale of 1 to 10, I give this album a solid 7.

Chris Robinson of the Black Crowes belts out solid lyrics

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GROUNDWORK

Ivy League

Charles Mitchell
Staff

Episode 8:

12:30 PM. Where was she? Jasmine had been waiting for Maknun for almost twenty minutes. She bought herself a coffee and muffin at Coffee Time and sat down at a table. When she approached the VP of administration at the pub last night, Maknun had been reluctant to talk, but Jasmine had convinced her that anything she said would be kept strictly anonymous. They made arrangements to meet at 12:15 the next day at Coffee time. Jasmine sat impatiently and doodled on her notepad. No tape recorder, that was the deal she had made.

Maknun wandered up to the table and took a seat. "Hi. Sorry I'm late."

Jasmine sighed. "I was starting to think that you weren't going to show up."

Maknun was nervous and it showed. She kept rubbing her hands on her pants and looking around uncomfortably. "I don't know that this is the best place to meet."

Jasmine drank some of her mocha java and scalded her tongue. "Maknun, I have been talking to a lot of people: Tom, Vinitha, Renata, Paul Thompson, and Campus police. Believe me, no one will ever trace anything you say to me back to you."

Maknun took a deep breath. "Listen, I 'm not even sure that I even know anything."

"Well let's start at the beginning. Did you know Brent?"

"No, not really."

Jasmine picked up her pad and jotted down notes as she listened intently.

"Brent had come to me, in confidence and said that he may want to drop out of school. Said he had to get away until things died down but he never expanded on it. I think he was seeing some girl and she was causing trouble or something. I'm thinking maybe her Dad killed him or her ex-boyfriend or maybe some current boyfriend."

Jasmine's eyes went ablaze. "Do the police know this?"

"Yes. But they said it was all speculation and they couldn't even find any girl that he was dating," she relaxed a bit and leaned back in her chair. "Look I don't even know if any of this is true. All I know is that Brent said he had to get away and I just assumed that he was scared that some girl's dad or perhaps boyfriend or even ex-boyfriend had something to do with it."

Jasmine wanted to make sure she had a handle on what Maknun was saying. "But the police investigated it and found nothing. You're convinced that he was seeing someone, who may have got him into trouble?"

Maknun nodded. "You should have seen his face and his tone of voice. I know this girl he was seeing may have led to his death."

Jasmine smiled. The story that she would write for *The Varsity* next week would blow the ceiling. She could already see the headline: ALLEGATIONS THAT GIRLFRIEND LED STUDENT TO HIS DEATH.

"Need any help?" Bryan threw down his towel and placed his hands on the machine.

Kevin looked up from his bench press. He was in the middle of rep. "Not really, but I like the view from here," he mocked, his eyes moving to the bulge in Bryan's track pants.

Bryan smiled and helped him with his last rep. "Still the compulsive flirt. Things haven't changed, have they?" he questioned rhetorically. He had always felt that Kevin was born to be a male courtesan. The blond Adonis just seemed destined to end up building a career of sleeping with rich older married men for money. "Mind if I work in?"

Kevin stood up as Bryan lay down and pressed twelve repetitions.

"I know you haven't changed since high school," Kevin countered. He wasn't a fool. Something was up. First Amber wants to sleep with him last night and now Bryan starts chatting with him like they were old friends. Yes they were friends, aside from Amber, but since he had left Western Collegiate High, Bryan had seemed too wrapped up in his own world to really take time out for any one else. What were they up to?

"What is that supposed to mean?" Bryan quizzed.

"Always planning and plotting. How many people in Scarborough Campus have you stepped on to get something?"

Bryan got up. "I do what I have to. I'm not proud of things that I have done, but I don't hesitate to do them to get what I want."

"How far would you go?" Kevin reached down and picked up Bryan's towel; he handed it to him but didn't let go. For a moment the two men's eyes locked. Sexual tension crept into the room.

Bryan wouldn't look away. Kevin was after something. But what?

Kevin wouldn't look away. Bryan was after something. But what?

"Are you going to give me my towel?" Bryan asked calmly. For a second, he felt a spark of attraction to Kevin. It would be hard not to. His friend was beautiful, masculine, had a gorgeous body, and could make any man feel like more of a man. When straight men met him, for a split second they wanted him.

Kevin smiled, displaying irresistible dimples and perfect teeth. "Come on, what are you up to these days? What machinations are you and Amber planning? Hostile takeover of U of T?"

Bryan chuckled and did another set. Then he got back up. "Now what makes you think Amber and I are up to something?"

"Hello," he said, stretching the word. "Because back when we were close in high-school, I used to sit back and watch you and Amber plan and scheme. Get this guy kicked off the basketball team. Break up this couple. Try to blackmail some teacher. You guys must be something now. Come on, you can tell me."

Bryan did another set on the bench press, then the two boys moved to the incline. Kevin was up first, cranking out ten reps.

Bryan spotted him. "If we were working on something, why would I tell you?"

"Still don't trust me."

"Don't take it personally. There aren't many people I do trust."

"So how are you doing these days, Kevin. Seeing anyone?"

"Do you really care?" Kevin asked incredulously, pumping his set.

"If I didn't, I wouldn't ask?"

For some reason Kevin believed him, so he answered. "No I'm not seeing anyone. But I did have a run in with Amber last night." He glanced at him for a response. But his friend was showing no signs of surprise.

"Yes, Amber told me about that," Bryan replied matter-of-factly. Was it his imagination or was Kevin fishing for something? Perhaps he had underestimated his high school friend. Maybe Kevin would be an asset to him and Amber far more than he had originally planned.

The two finished their workout and headed into the locker room. Not by coincidence but by Bryan's calculation, he happened to use a day locker next to Kevin's rented locker. It was 9:30PM, and being a Friday, the facility was pretty much deserted.

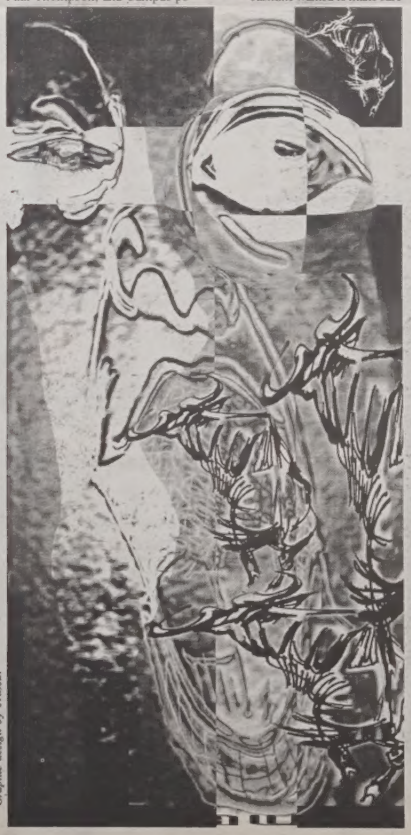
"Are you gonna tell me what you're after?" Kevin quizzed wondering why Bryan had used a day locker and how come he ended up beside him. What was it that had that made Mr. Cantrell so interested in him?

"What do you mean?" Bryan said, fiddling with his lock.

"What I mean is, suddenly after six years, Amber decides she wants to sleep with me. You suddenly want to be best friends again. And you suddenly end up with a locker beside me. What does this all have to do with Brent Anderson?"

Bryan was shocked and it showed. "How much do you know?"

To be continued...



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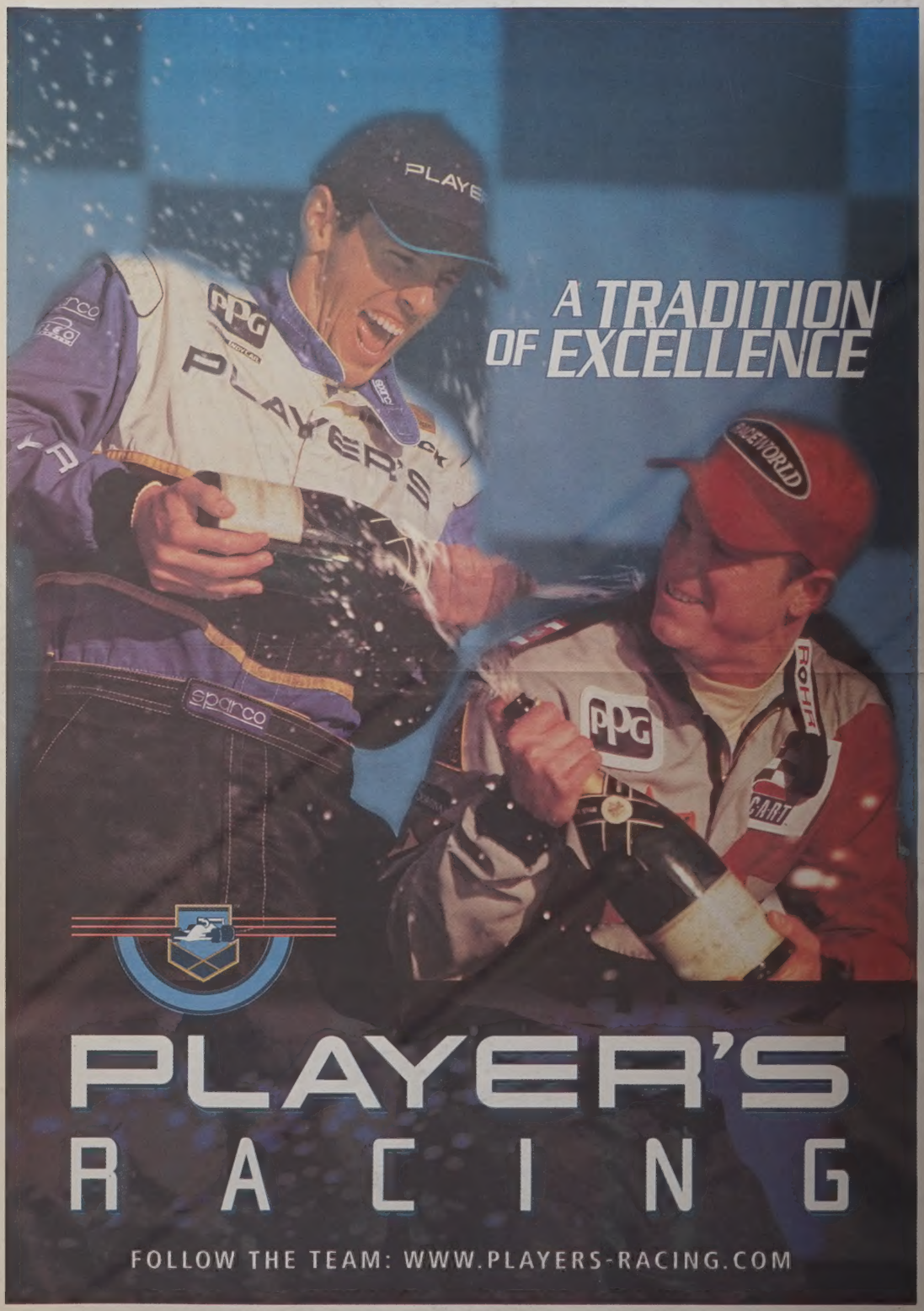
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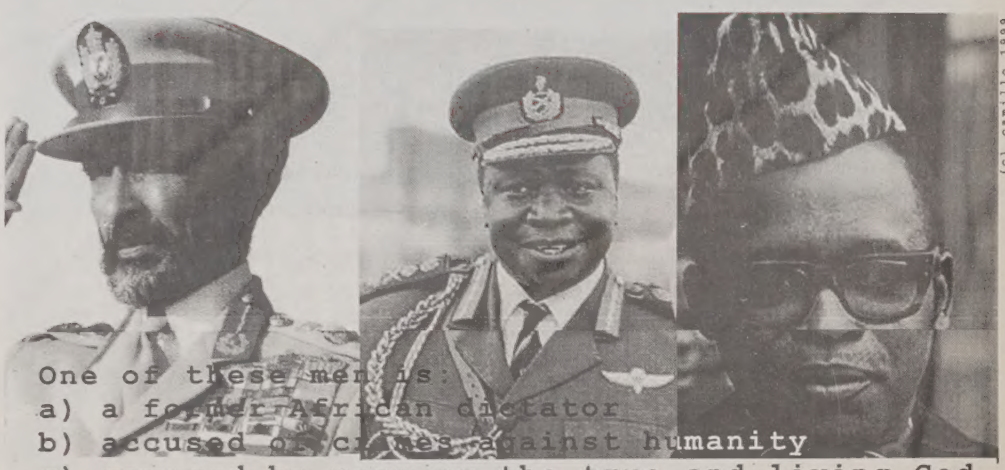
(c) camillo 1999
One of these men is:
a) a former African dictator
b) accused of crimes against humanity
c) revered by many as the true and living God

REAL ASTROLOGY FOR AN UNREAL WORLD

Aries March 20 - April 19 This is the beginning of a very lucky time for you, so you had better find the time to work out exactly what you want from life. The sooner the better, because if you don't know what you want, by this time next week there will be no hope for you. I believe you can do it but you're on your own, the stars can only help you get so far. You've also been acting very childish lately, so you might want to make an effort to be more mature.

Taurus April 20 - May 20 This week you are destined to realize that there are certain things that need to be talked about, and you are going to have to be the initiator of it all. Everything is always so much better when it's out in the open. It is a fact that people feel much more joyous when they move out into the beauty and spaciousness of the outdoors. So why don't you go out for a walk and be one with nature for at least a little while. You'll come back completely rejuvenated.

Gemini May 21 - June 20 If you want to put a stop to something, do it as soon as possible. You may think playing it cool is the best way; but, you are wrong. Sometimes it's better just to be honest. The sun is high and the sky is blue but even when it's not, try to make the best out of weird situations. Find a friend, talk, sing and just be immensely merry and stellar. Hey, C'est la vie baby.

Cancer June 21 - July 22 You've been having a few problems recently and you won't make any progress without putting in a massive amount of effort and concentration. A weekend away may provide you with the space you need to put things in a better perspective. I hear that going away for a few days of solitude helps a person to find themselves and makes everything feel better even if it's not. Who says deception is such a bad thing? People play with it all the time.

Leo July 23 - August 22 It might be a good idea to make a few changes; they don't necessarily have to be anything major. Even something simple like planting a flower or saving an endangered animal could make you feel a whole lot better. If you are wondering why things are so awful, it's because someone decided to change the rules without consulting you first. Who do they think they are? I don't know, but they better have a good explanation. I wouldn't like to be the one to face the wrath of a leo.

Virgo August 23 - September 22 Someone has quite an influence over you and it's making you act very peculiar. It could just be the craziness that February 14th brings, but there are people who would rather have the old you back in their lives. The new you is too strange for them. They're starting to believe that an extraterrestrial being sucked out your brains and hasn't returned them yet. Smarten up and reclaim your brains.

Libra September 23 - October 22 You've been wondering what the right thing to do is, well, here's how it goes. If you want to make a move, now is the time to do it. You won't be sorry. You are in big demand at the moment so bide your time wisely. If you don't you will wind up exhausted. Nobody likes a cranky, moody, confrontational, crabby grouch who whines and speaks maliciously to others people. If it happens stay in your room until you're better relaxed.

Scorpio October 23 - November 21 There's no stopping you! You have always had a talent for getting what you want and this could be a most beneficial and productive time. Beware of saying things you don't really mean and making promises you can't keep. Most of all, beware of those shadows that lurk under your bed and in your closet, they are scary little suckers.

Sagittarius November 22 - December 21 If you haven't been getting much attention lately maybe you should take drastic measures and act more dramatically. Start trying harder, it'll all pay off in the end. Spend more time with your friends, they're trying to tell you something without actually giving it all away. They are thinly veiling it in symbolism. Look into the depths of what you seek and hopefully you'll come back out with answers and not a feeling of loss within.

Capricorn December 22 - January 19 What kind of trouble have you been causing lately? You know what I mean, so stop! It can't all be about you! Look at the people around you, they need help. Give them the assistance they seek. I know you've been feeling kind of tired lately, but once your batteries have been fully recharged, you'll be ready to get back out there. Stop biting peoples' heads off!

Aquarius January 20 - February 18 You have an irritating habit of always losing stuff. You were probably one of those children whose mother had to sew your mittens into your coat sleeves. You want to know what kids like me used to call kids like you? I'd tell you, but I've been told that I'm not allowed to print those words in the newspaper. Surround yourself with the colours blue and yellow and you'll be happy, with or without a valentine date.

Pisces February 19 - March 19 Focus on things that you really value in life. Things like your favourite CDs, warm fuzzy slippers and thoughts of a better fish bowl. Wouldn't you you just love a bigger fish bowl? I know you have aspirations of renovating the plastic castle. If you are spending valentines day alone again this year don't obsess over it. Deep down you realize that staying at home and reading a good novel will make it all better.

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